

PRESS TELEGRAM
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MEDICINE AND YOU

Advance New Theory in Lung Cancer Cause

By BEN ZINSER

A London researcher proposes a new theory concerning the cause of lung cancer.

Dr. R. D. Passey of Royal Marsden Hospital thinks lung cancer is a sequel to tissue damage rather than a result of specific action of cancer-causing agents.

He speculates that an excess of mucous secretions is the condition responsible for many lung cancers.

Mucus is sticky and will cling to a patch of respiratory-tract cell lining for long periods, he notes. This blanketing action interferes with the normal exchange of gases and cellular fluid in the underlying cells, he says.

Dr. Passey believes cigarette smoke, by its irritating action, brings about the tissue changes that lead to lung cancer. In other words, he believes it is the smoke's irritant qualities—not can-



cer-causing chemicals in the smoke—that bring on cancer.

He also believes climate is an influence—that it causes undetected damage to the breathing system.

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MEANWHILE, the controversy over cigarettes and lung cancer continues.

In a review of the subject in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, Dr. Louis Pelnor of Swedish Hospital, Brooklyn, sums up:

In the present state of knowledge, it is premature to say that cigarette smoking is the cause or even an important cause of lung cancer.

He says further: "The statistical studies relating cigarette smoking to lung cancer seem to suffer from the lack of specificity of effect."

ENQUIRER
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British Expert Refutes Theory On Lung Cancer

LONDON, July 20 (UPI)—A British cancer expert today challenged the theory that a lifetime of smoking can cause cancer.

Dr. R. D. Passey, emeritus professor of experimental pathology at the University of Leeds, explained his thinking in the medical journal Lancet, after studying the smoking histories of 499 men with lung cancer.

Passey said that the age when lung cancer develops is determined by neither the amount of smoke nor the age at which smoking began. And if this is true, he said, tobacco smoke does not act as a substance causing malignant tumors.

He said it is now accepted that smoking increases the risk of lung cancer, and the heavier the smoking the greater the risk. "But no where has it been claimed that the heavy smoker is stricken with cancer earlier than the light smoker," he added.

"My figures show clearly that the disease developed at approximately the same age in those who began to smoke earliest and in those who started much later."

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